THE SWORD INTERVAL

BY BEN FLEUTER

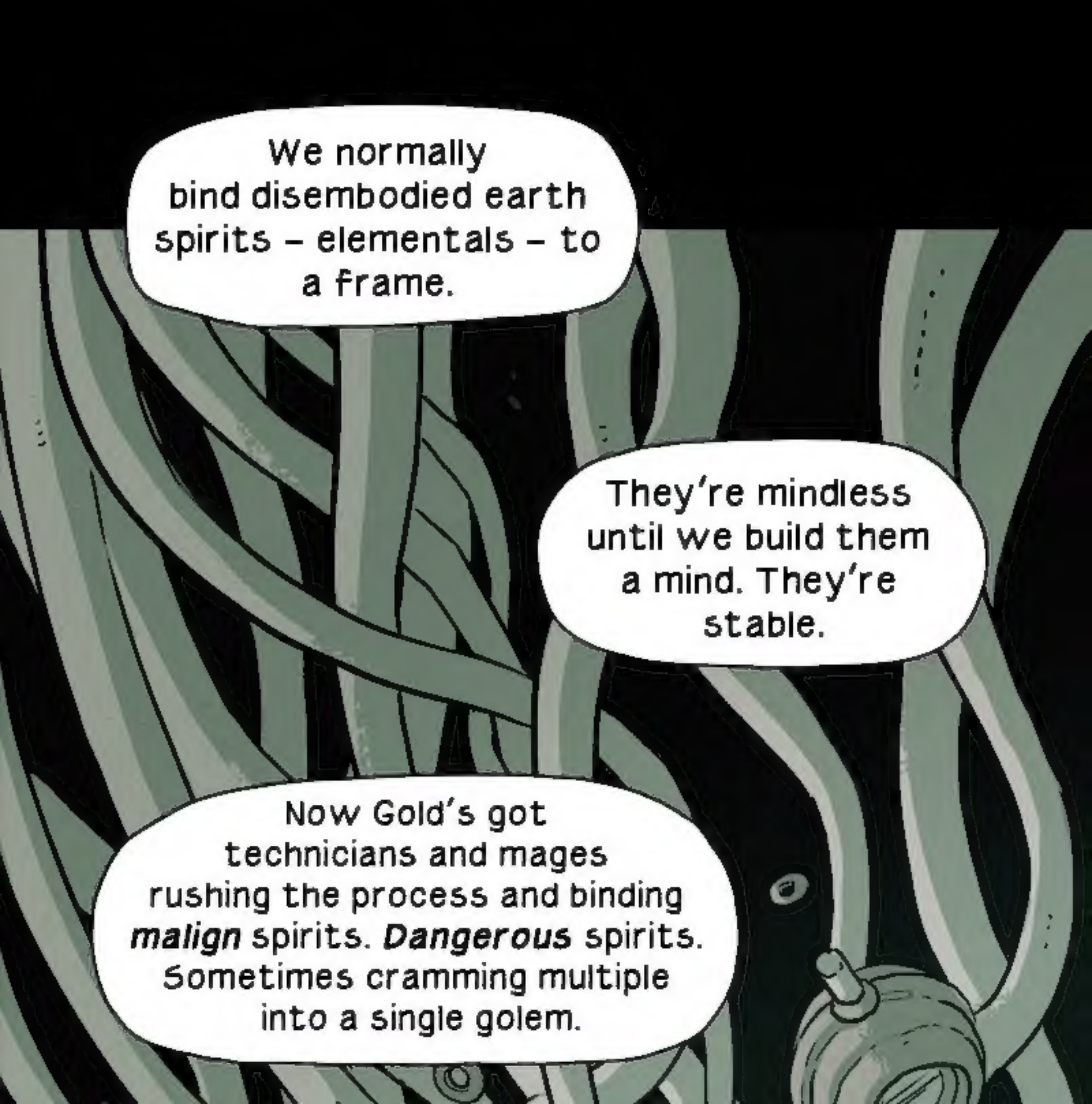
Dr. Snow.
You changing offices?
Yeah! You could say that!
They're kicking me off golem R&D!

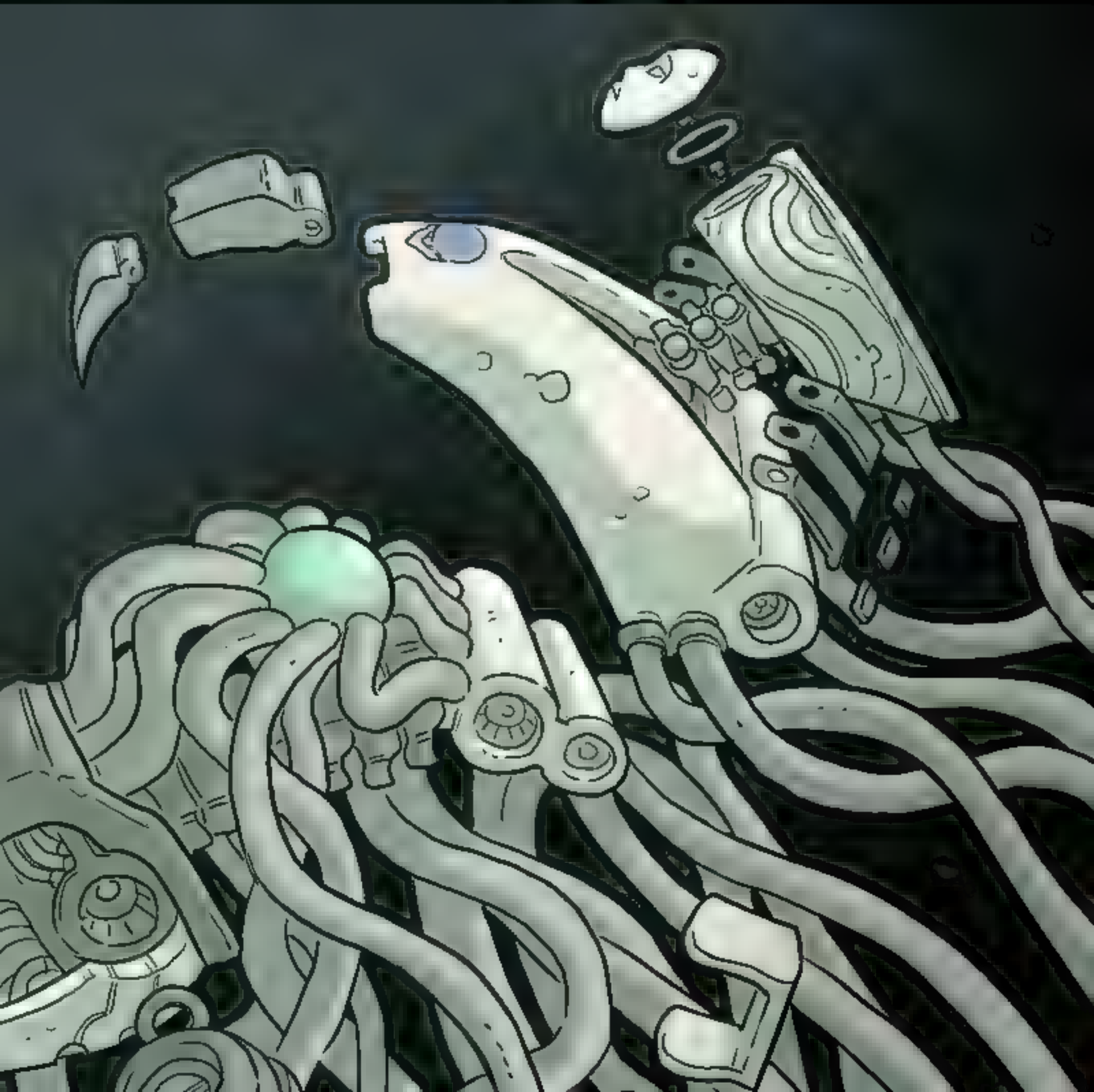
What?
But you're a leading expert on–
I am! And that's why I had objections to the new Caryatid model.

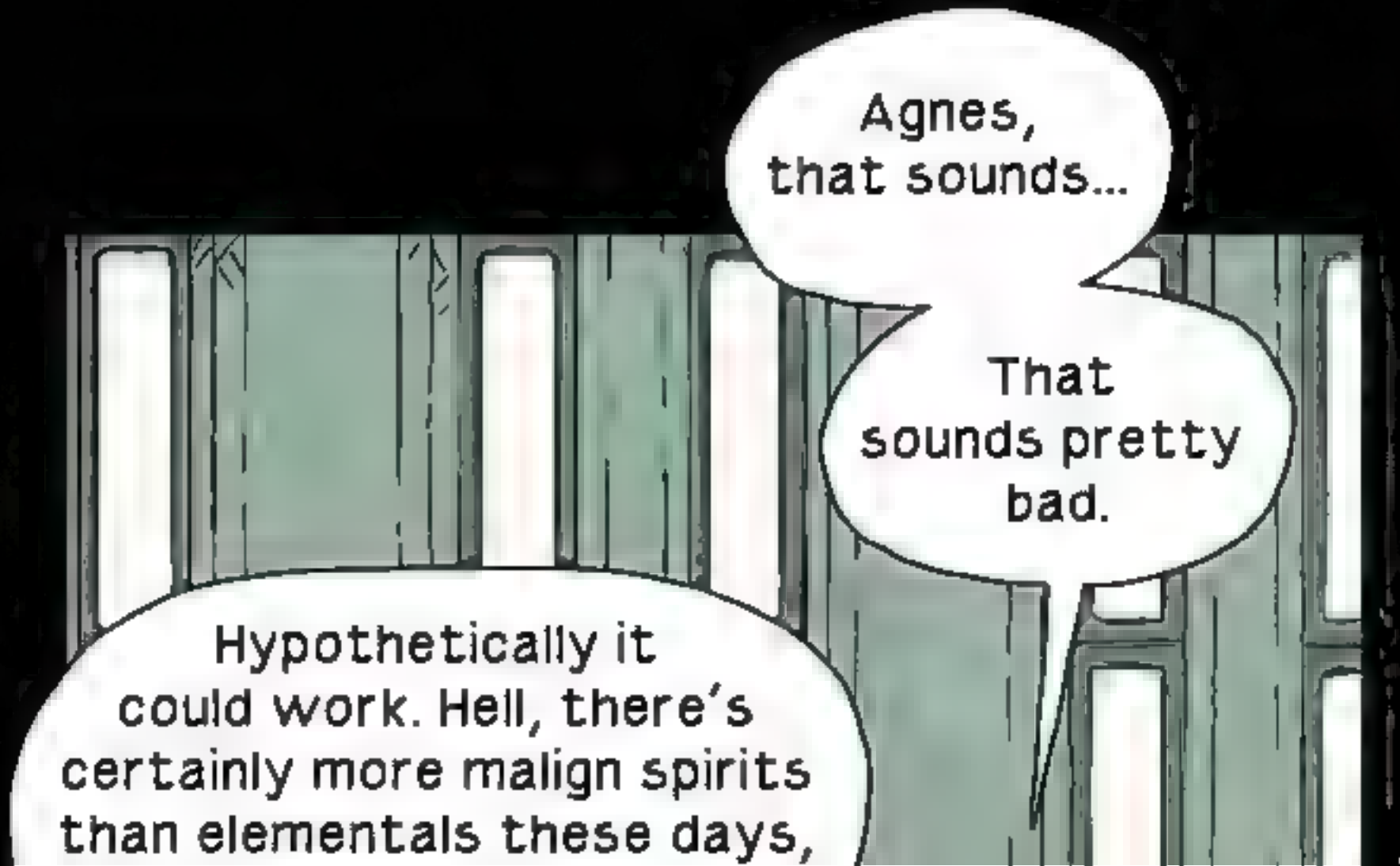
Hmm. I saw the prototypes in action.
They are... intense.
They're monstrous.

I wasn't going to say it but--

No.
Literally.


We normally bind disembodied earth spirits – elementals – to a frame.
They're mindless until we build them a mind. They're stable.
Now Gold's got technicians and mages rushing the process and binding *malign* spirits. *Dangerous* spirits. Sometimes cramming multiple into a single golem.




Agnes, that sounds...
That sounds pretty bad.
Hypothetically it could work. Hell, there's certainly more malign spirits than elementals these days,

if you're trying to be resourceful.

But doing it proper takes funding. Research. *Time!* Instead, we're mass-producing these things.
A.SNOW

The Chairman's losing his mind.
Careful with that sorta talk, Hult.

I *kindly* worded some *concerns* and got demoted to frickin' maintenance. Hate to see what they'd do to mutineers.

Snow!
Your notes!
Eh!
Trash 'em for me!
They're not doing
anyone any good.

But-
Oh.
Ivanova what--

Psst! Melvin!
What's happening?!

It's the Harbinger, Osric!

Someone called in with her location!

I guess this'll all be over pretty soon!

NOW.

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